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IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions.

1. (Currently amended) A method for detecting ~~non-A G hepatitis~~hepatitis Y virus in a sample negative for hepatitis C Virus (HCV), comprising:

a) contacting said sample with monoclonal antibody HCV.OT 1F under conditions whereby an antigen/antibody complex can form; and

b) then detecting formation of an antigen/antibody complex, thereby detecting hepatitis Y virus in the sample, ~~the presence or absence of immunoreactivity between the monoclonal antibody and the sample, wherein the presence of immunoreactivity indicates the presence of non-A G hepatitis virus.~~

2. (Currently amended). ~~An immortalized human hepatocyte cell line deposited at the European Collection of Cell Cultures (ECACC) under accession number 98121503. The method of claim 1, wherein said sample is contacted with a monoclonal antibody having the same immunoreactivity as monoclonal antibody HCV.OT 1F.~~

3. (Canceled).

4. (Currently amended) An isolated hepatitis yY virus genome comprising a nucleotide sequence that hybridizes to a nucleic acid of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 or to the complement thereof.

5. (Currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid sequence comprising a nucleotide sequence that hybridizes to a nucleic acid having a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

a) SEQ ID NO: 1;

b) or the complement thereof of SEQ ID NO:1;

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- c) and the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2; and
- d) or the complement thereof of SEQ ID NO:2.

6. (Currently amended) An isolated polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence or fragment thereof wherein said amino acid sequence is encoded by a nucleotide sequence that hybridizes to a nucleic acid having a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 1 or the complement thereof and the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 or the complement thereof of the nucleotide sequence of claim 5.

7. (Currently amended) An antibody reactive with the polypeptide according to claim 6 or a functional fragment thereof.

8. (Currently amended) A method for the detection of detecting hepatitis Y virus in a sample, comprising: the steps of isolating nucleic acid from said sample,

a) contacting the nucleic acids sample with the nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 1 or a fragment thereof, and SEQ ID NO:2 or a fragment thereof, and detecting the presence or absence of hybridization between the nucleic acid and the nucleotide sequence, wherein the presence of hybridization indicates the presence of hepatitis Y virus of claim 5 under conditions whereby nucleic acid hybridization can occur; and

b) detecting nucleic acid hybridization, thereby detecting hepatitis Y virus in the sample.

9. (Canceled).

10. (Currently amended) A method for diagnosing infection with hepatitis Y virus in a subject, comprising:

a) the steps of providing a sample from a subject suspected of being infected with Hepatitis Y virus, contacting the sample from the subject with a hepatitis Y virus according to

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~~claim 5 or the polypeptide according to of claim 6 under conditions whereby an antigen/antibody complex can form;~~; and

~~b) then detecting the presence or absence of immunoreactivity between the sample and the virus or the polypeptide, wherein the presence of immunoreactivity indicates formation of an antigen/antibody complex, thereby diagnosing infection of the subject with hepatitis Y virus.~~

11. (Currently amended) A method for diagnosing infection with hepatitis Y virus in a subject, comprising:

~~a) the steps of contacting a sample from the subject suspected of being infected with Hepatitis Y virus, with an the antibody according to of claim 67 under conditions whereby an antigen/antibody complex can form;~~; and

~~b) then detecting the presence or absence of immunoreactivity between the monoclonal antibody and the sample, wherein the presence of immunoreactivity indicates the subject is infected~~formation of an antigen/antibody complex, thereby diagnosing infection of the subject with hepatitis Y virus.

12. (Currently amended) A method for growing hepatitis Y virus (HYV), comprising infecting~~comprising infecting~~ cells with HYV and propagating said cells *in vitro*, wherein the HYV comprises the nucleotide sequence that hybridizes with a nucleic acid selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 1 or the complement thereof, and SEQ ID NO: 2 or the complement thereof of claim 5.

13. (Currently amended) A vaccine composition comprising the polypeptide according to of claim 6 in a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

14. (Currently amended) A vaccine composition comprising the nucleic acid sequence according to of claim 5 in a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

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15. (Currently amended). A method of diagnosing non A-G hepatitis, comprising infecting a cell of claim 2 with an inoculum from a subject suspected of having non A-G hepatitis, contacting the cell with monoclonal antibody HCV.OT 1F, and then detecting the presence or absence of immunoreactivity between the monoclonal antibody and the cell, wherein the presence of immunoreactivity indicates the subject has non A-G hepatitis. A method of detecting both hepatitis C virus and hepatitis Y virus in a sample, comprising:

a) contacting said sample with monoclonal antibody HCV.OT 1F under conditions whereby an antigen/antibody complex can form;

b) detecting formation of an antigen/antibody complex of step (a);

c) contacting the antigen/antibody complex of step (a) with an antibody that specifically binds a hepatitis C virus antigen;

d) detecting formation of an antigen/antibody complex of step (c);

e) contacting the antigen/antibody complex of step (a) with an antibody that specifically binds a hepatitis Y virus antigen; and

f) detecting formation of an antigen/antibody complex of step (e).

whereby detection of an antigen/antibody complex of step (c) and step (e) detects both hepatitis C virus and hepatitis Y virus in the sample.

16. (Currently amended). The method according to claim 8, wherein the nucleotide sequence has the sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 or a fragment thereof. The method of claim 15, wherein said sample is contacted in step (a) with a monoclonal antibody having the same immunoreactivity as monoclonal antibody HCV.OT 1F.

17. (New) A method of detecting hepatitis Y virus in a sample, comprising:

a) contacting the sample with a primer pair that amplifies the nucleotide sequence of claim 5, under conditions whereby nucleic acid amplification can occur; and

b) detecting nucleic acid amplification of the nucleotide sequence of claim 5, thereby detecting hepatitis Y virus in the sample.

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18. (New) The method of claim 17, wherein the primer pair is selected from the group consisting of:

- a) the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3 and the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:4;
- b) the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:5 and the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:6;
- c) the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:7 and the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:8; and
- d) the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:9 and the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:10.

19. (New) A method of diagnosing hepatitis Y virus infection in a subject, comprising:

- a) contacting a sample from the subject with a primer pair that amplifies the nucleotide sequence of claim 5, under conditions whereby nucleic acid amplification can occur; and
- b) detecting nucleic acid amplification of the nucleotide sequence of claim 5, thereby diagnosing hepatitis Y virus infection in the subject.

20. (New) The method of claim 19, wherein the primer pair is selected from the group consisting of:

- a) the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3 and the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:4;
- b) the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:5 and the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:6;
- c) the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:7 and the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:8; and

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d) the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:9 and the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:10.